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NO. 4

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THE

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T H E M O D E R N S C H O O L M A N

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NO. 4

IN A DOCTOR'S OFFICE

The subject of our conversation was the remarkable feats of Helen Keller. The doctor questioned my assertion that she was able to appreciate music. Perhaps I was mistaken in my opinion. I don't know what authority there is for it, but it seemed to me that I had heard something to that effect before.

The doctor paused for a minute or two, and suddenly said: "You know, I read a statement of Helen Keller's the other day, in which she confessed that she was an atheist."

I registered extreme surprise. I didn't recall hearing this before. Perhaps I was asleep when it was mentioned in our Psychology class. I said nothing beyond expressing my surprise.

"You know", the doctor continued, "it seems to me that there are two kinds of minds. One, to which the proofs for the existence of an All-Wise and Good Creator appeals; the other, which cannot grasp this truth. And the reason, so it seems to me, is that big problem about the evils of the world."

I didn't know, as a philosopher, what to say about his division or classification of minds. From somewhere in the back of my head, the idea of "Grace" protruded itself. And I was on the point of mentioning this. I realized, however, that I was talking to a learned man, -- the doctor besides other accomplishments of renown in the Latin and Greek classics was an ardent debater in a philosophy seminar of the city, -- and conscious of my deficiency in the knowledge of the doctrine of "Grace" I hesitated to answer. I racked my brain, however, for some philosophical explanation of the existence of evil, but beyond recalling the distinction between Metaphysical, Physical, and Moral evil, I couldn't recall having heard this subject treated thoroughly in class. My time was about up, so I acquiesced to the difficulty of solving the problem, and after a comment of the doctor on the unfavorableness of the solutions proposed for this problem, I took my leave.

The question of the evil in the world gripped me. Its attractions were renewed by its practical appeal. I wondered what I, a Scholastic Philosopher in the making, would say to Helen Keller if she proposed this difficulty to me: "If as you say a God exists who created the world, then that God must have created me in the condition I'm in and with all my physical defects. Further, He must have created all the other creatures with their physical defects. In short, He must have created in some way the moral defects and evils which abound so much in the world today. But my idea of a God is so different from anything like this, that if He is the one and only God, I'd rather believe that there is no God at all. And that is my belief and conviction."

Of course, I should immediately answer that God does not create these evils. I should maintain that He merely permits them, and that not for the sake of the evil itself, but for the sake of some good that may accrue therefrom.

I don't think this would completely satisfy her, and so I think I should try to explain it to her in some such manner as this.

Evil is considered in three ways: namely as Metaphysical, Physical, or Moral. Metaphysical evil is defined as the absence of further perfections than the nature of a thing demands. Physical evil is the absence of a perfection due to the nature of a thing. Moral evil is the absence of moral goodness. In all of these the definition of evil can be seen, for it is defined as an absence of some good. Metaphysical evil is attributed to and is caused by God, not, however, because He wishes to create such evils but because He cannot create beings with infinite perfections. A created infinite being is a chimera, an intrinsic impossibility. The question remains, however, about the Physical and Moral evils. It is these that we have in mind when later we shall speak of evils.

The question provoked by the existence of these evils in the world is not an objection to the existence of God, but rather to the Infinite Goodness of this God. Philosophically speaking, it is an objection against His being infinite both in the perfections He possesses and in the degree of His possessing them. God cannot create these evils for the reason that He cannot create that which He Himself does not in some manner possess. "Nemo dat quod non habet" holds as well with regard to God as to man. Evil as we have seen is the absence of some good, either due or moral. As such God cannot possess evil because He possesses all perfections possible and in the highest degree possible. In other words because He is Infinite, and therefore Infinite Goodness. If, then, God cannot create evils because He does not possess them, and He cannot possess them because He is Infinite, the objection of the existence of evils in the world is not an objection against the existence of a God as the cause of all things, but an objection against His being Infinite.

The existence of evils in the world created by an Infinitely Good God does, to say the least, seem incompatible with Infinite Goodness. And yet if we can prove that God is Infinitely Good, and prove it beyond the shadow of a doubt, it remains for our weak minds to try to reconcile these apparently contradictory judgments in the best possible way.

That God is Infinitely Good, and hence is free from all evil is proven from the fact that He is Infinite. And why is He Infinite? Because if He weren't,

He would be limited. But how can God be limited? He is a Being necessarily existing for all time and eternity; He exists not because some one else has brought Him into existence or caused Him to exist, but because He has the reason for His existence in Himself. He is not indebted to any other being or thing outside of Himself for anything that is intrinsically necessary: for His existence, for His pleasure, for His knowledge or for anything else intrinsic to Him. He is One, Unique, the like of whom could not coexist with Him.

To say that God is limited means to say that He is restricted either by the thing He possesses, or by the manner in which He possesses it. Now the things that God is said to possess,--I say "said to possess" because these very perfections as they exist in God, are God Himself, or rather the divine nature of God,--these things are perfections or realities which of themselves bespeak no limitation whatever. Goodness, justice, mercy, knowledge, kindness, as we ourselves see when we predicate them of different people, do not of themselves imply a limit beyond which they cannot go. Some people are more kind than others, more good than others, more just than others. If these perfections admit of grades in finite creatures, surely there is no intrinsic impossibility of in their being conceived as infinite. No, God is not limited by the perfections He possesses.

Nor can He be limited by the manner in which He possesses them. If God's manner of possessing perfections were limited, the limitation must proceed from His very nature. A container cannot hold more than it has been made to hold. Now God's nature, in the first place, has not been "made". It has never been brought into existence. It has always existed and will always continue to exist without ever beginning to exist or ceasing to exist. The reason for this is that His nature is a necessary nature. In the second place God's nature has not been made to hold a certain amount. This follows from the above. If His nature has not been caused to exist, or made, no limitations can proceed from an external cause. On the other hand, since it is a necessary nature, it must possess everything that is necessary to it. Now infinite perfections are surely necessary, as every one will admit. Therefore God's nature must possess infinite perfections, if it possesses any perfection.

A supposed case might throw some light on the question. Suppose all the radium in the world, when brought together, would fill a volume of one cubic foot. I have a container that measures a volume of two cubic feet. I can put all the radium in my container and still have room for more. Yet I am limited in my possession of radium, and the reason is that there is no more radium to be had. If goodness were like radium, God would be limited in possessing it. But it is not. Goodness is not material. It is spiritual, and therefore does not of itself imply limitations. Therefore it can be infinite as well as finite.

Increase the amount of radium so that it will fill a volume of three cubic feet. My container, measuring a volume of two cubic feet, will prevent me from possessing all the radium in the world. I am limited because my container will not hold more. Now God's nature is conceived as the container of His perfections. This nature is unlimited by reason of its being unproduced by any cause outside of it, and therefore, since it is unproduced, it is a nature that ^{must} of necessity exist. If therefore God's nature, conceived as a container, cannot be limited by its existence, it cannot limit that which it contains.

I wonder if Miss Keller is willing to subscribe so far? I admit the problem of the question of evils has not yet been solved. Only one part of the apparent contradictories has been proven. Grant this and it remains to be seen whether it can be reconciled with the difficulty about the existence of evil. I think it can be reconciled, but this will have to come later. This metaphysics has taken my breath away.

Albert H. Hoenemeyer, S. J.

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THE PROBLEM OF CONTACT

He gave me the book. "There! Read!"

I took and read: "The Herring Gull feeds on mussels. Its method of breaking the shell is this: the bird takes a mussel, flies some fifty feet high, and drops the shell down on the rocky ground below. Then it flies down to see if the shell is broken open. If not, it repeats the attempt, but with this difference, namely, it flies to a much greater height before dropping the shell."

"That's intelligence!" There was a note of triumph in his voice. For seventy years this man, Mr. Otto Widmann of St. Louis, had been a close student of birds and botany. For fifty-five years he had studied the natural history of Missouri and surrounding states. He had written books, was quoted as an authority, and now at the hale old age of eighty-five was still very much alive and very much a student of nature.

Intelligence! I felt a thrill go through me. Here was a REAL circle and a REAL adversary.

"Why, yes," I said. "Intelligence, materialiter conced--" I stopped short. This "adversary" was not to be answered by a Latin distinction, even by a valid Latin distinction. I hesitated.

He was watching me. "It's intelligence//!. It's intelligence!"

"But intelligence," I had my thesis in mind now, "intelligence connotes ~~it~~ ideas; an intelligent being has thoughts, ideas, judgments, reason; he tells the world about his thoughts even if he has to use a deaf-and-dumb alphabet."

He was not, I saw, impressed.

"Animals," I continued, "have no ideas; no animal in 5000 years ever had one. Animals"--I fairly flung the minor of a syllogism at him--"don't talk, can't talk."

He was fingering his book. "Why," he said as I paused, "only this summer a meadowlark tried to keep me away from its nest by pretending that it had a broken wing."

"That was an instinctive act."

He smiled and in that smile I saw that I had failed. Worse than this, the smile told me that I had succeeded-- in giving the impression I had a dogmatic axe to grind. He was a Scientist, an observer of fact; I, I was but an unscientific dabbler, dogmatizer.

"But if animals have no language," I repeated almost mechanically, "they have no intellect."

He was still smiling so I tried another lead. "Surely we don't regard animals as morally responsible for their acts, which is only another way of saying we regard them as having no ideas of good or evil."

He was not impressed. I tried again.

"Animals have never made any progress".

He thought the argument plausible. "Plausible, but then I do not claim animals have the intellect that man has. They have only a low form of intellect."

"But don't you see," I had a point here, if I could only use it, "don't you see that if a honey-bee or a robin has intellect, it is more intelligent than we are? They never make a mistake in building their homes, even the first time they build. We are not so intelligent that we--" But here I distinctly felt that certainly he was not listening. "Still thinking of his meadowlark," I said sotto-voce, "well I see, Mr. Otto Widmann", still sotto-voce, "I must use another argument for you. Here's one that will fix you."

"You're a scientist, Mr. Widmann," I began, remembering the oft-repeated phrase "teste experientia", "and you want scientific proof. Well a scientific experiment has proven that animals have no intelligence."

"Who performed the experiment?" He was listening now.

"Thorndike."

"A biologist?"

"No, a doctor of Educational Psychology."

"Oh!"

This "Oh" told me I might here more effectively use Wasmann;--Wasmann "a biologist". "Wasmann", I began, "also proved this. By the way," I thought this might help render my hearer "benevolus", "Wasmann is a Jesuit."

"Oh! I see. One of your Fathers. Isn't that nice. A German too, like myself. Does Wasmann live at--at--your College?"

We parted--in the words of the poet--"him havin' his opinion of me and me havin' my opinion of him." I had defended my thesis against a real adversary

(Mr. Widman, incredulous reader, is a living man, and not two weeks ago I wished him a "Happy New Year.") And "adversary" had come off better than I. Somehow I had failed to make contact, had failed to dress up the scientific scholastic terminology of "materialiter et equivalenter, concedo; formaliter, nego" in living English. I had met the non-scholastic truth-seeking mind and the impression had been made that scholastics are mere word-spinning metaphysicians, or, worse, afflicted incurably with the malady of "Cicero pro domo sua."

Will the problem of contact solve itself as one grows older in experience?

Paul Dent, S.J.

THE MODES OF LEARNING

As the father of a child watches from day to day the advance made by his child in learning to use its faculties, he cannot but be impressed by the mechanism - if we may call the faculties a mechanism - which manifests such marvelous abilities. Before the child has mastered the art of walking, it has begun to talk; and when it can talk, a word, that does little more than quiver a membrane of its ear, can direct the child and hasten its progress toward the proper management of both body and mind. With the power of speech and the use of his limbs, the child reveals his hidden powers with the beauty and grace that has well been compared to the unfolding of a budding flower. But how? Is this babe a compressed man which bursts forth to its perfection like a popping grain of corn? Do its perfections lie hidden in a bud as do the petals of a rose? Or does a child refine or construct its own mechanism each time a new power is made manifest?

Besides satisfying our curiosity, an answer to these questions would be an advantage, both to the child who is learning and to the father or instructor who is trying to teach him. If we, ourselves, knew how we learned, we could more effectually take those means which would teach us. If the teacher understood exactly what was required to teach a child the use of his limbs and tongue, or his memory and mind; he could satisfy those requirements much more exactly. We can get some idea of these requirements from a study of the six modes of learning.

We do not begin with nothing. We come into this world endowed with a nervous system aligned in finely ordered fashion. The first chill blasts of air excite impulses which in turn arouse the intercostal muscles, the larynx, the tear glands - all of which combine into a moderately successful attempt at crying. This continues until the tiny soft muscles tire out. Fatigue ensues, bringing on regular breathing, and finally sleep, which closes school for that period. We are sensitive, too, to other stimuli. If an object be placed in our hand, we will squeeze it. If a pin prick our foot, we withdraw it; and so on.

In the meantime our control centers whose function is to direct our movements have not been idle. They have learned how it feels to have these muscles

contract, and have learned too how to contract them without the external stimulus. In the course of the next few months such a variety of stimuli will have been given to us that every muscle in our body will have contracted, leaving a record on the control center of such a kind that the control center itself can reproduce the movement. (I am not speaking here of those muscles which are automatically controlled, over which even an adult has no control.) Moreover, after much waving and kicking, the control centers will have learned how to direct movements with the aid of the eye and the kinesthetic sense.

Some of us very soon after our arrival in the family learned that we were the lord and master of the household. It may have occurred in this way: Perhaps a pin broke from its clasp and gouged deeply into our tender flesh. This stimulus, of course, called forth a heart-rending appeal for relief, and the gallant family rushed to our relief. When we found that our wails always brought caressing hands, we learned to cry whenever our little heart desired anything. This we learned, not by the simple reflex that taught us how to cry, but by associating the cry with the caressing hands. This association is something new in school, and can justly be called a second form of learning.

An animal could have learned everything that we have learned so far. Now we begin a third form of learning, requiring an intellect, of which no animal is capable.

Just when we began to use this third mode would be hard to determine. Many experiences were required before it was possible. A summary of these experiences as presented by the memory to the intellect would be of the following nature: The child would cry and the family would come to the cradle; it would shake the rattle and hear a noise. When these facts are presented to the maturing intellect, which has the native ability to classify, they would be summed up as causes and effects, or as means to an end. Every new experience of this kind would train and perfect the intellect in seeking causes and effects, with the result that when the child meets with a new situation which it recognizes as an end, or as an effect, it would look for the means or the cause. Having found the means it will take it to produce the effect. When a child begins to reason in the way just described, we say that it has learned.

Similar processes obtain by which a child comes to the use of the other powers of the intellect: inference, deduction, predication, mediate reasoning, and the like. They are all classed under the third mode of learning which consists essentially in presenting to the intellect material (sensations) with which it can function.

Theoretically, with these three modes of learning the child has perfected his powers of learning, and it is just a question of time until his knowledge of everything that is possible for him to know is complete; but practically, these faculties are hindered by fatigue, disease, and environment to such an extent that the child can be helped enormously by others.

We must not imagine that the help a child receives from its parents

gives the child new faculties. Parents and teachers can only bring about ideal conditions for the faculties, which are already there, to act. A child learns from a teacher in three ways: by imitation, by training, and by instruction.

We all have a peculiar gift of imitating the actions of others. Smile at a baby and it smiles. Yawn at a gathering of people and several of the gathering will yawn. Tell a boy that a base ball can be knocked a block and he will believe you; take a good swing at the ball in the presence of the boy and he will not be satisfied until he can do it. This process of imitating need not be intellectual, as can be exemplified by performing any sort of antics in front of a monkey cage. It seems to be closely connected with the first form of independent learning.

Proceeding then to the second form of learning, it is evident that a teacher can bring about the new association which we have described above by simply placing the conditions. This form of learning is called training.

Finally by means of words and signs by which the teacher can talk to the student, he can be taught to use his intellect in every way that the teacher is capable of using his.

We are endowed then, from the beginning with the faculty, which gradually matures; and this faculty acts with the perfection of which it is capable all during growth. A child has accomplished as a great feat in proportion to its powers when it shakes a rattle to make a noise, as Edison accomplishes in proportion to his power when he heats carbon in a vacuum to produce light. It is a mistake to try to hurry too much in learning. Present the faculty with that of which it is capable at its stage of growth, and leave the speed of the growth to nature.

Vincent M. O'Flaherty, S.J.

SCHOLASTICISM: A LIVING PHILOSOPHY

"Scholasticism is dead!" says the scientist of today. And while we point to the work done at Louvain and elsewhere as an emphatic denial of his assertion, the very words "Neo-Scholastic" and "revival" sound like an admission that it did die once.

It is positively heartening, then, to hear a scientist of recognized ability come forward with the statement that not only is Scholasticism very much alive, but that it has never died: that it is today, and has ever been, a "philosophia perennis". This was the keynote of a paper read by Father Schmitt at the organization meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association at Washington on January 5th, and repeated for our benefit a few days ago.

The speaker's main concern was to show that scholastic philosophy is the only system adequate to meet the demands of the scientific method, as

employed in biology. His remarks will be published in full among the proceedings of the recent meeting at the Catholic University. At present I merely wish to call attention to the emphasis which was placed on the essential vitality of the scholastic system.

This point was stringly insisted upon throughout the whole paper, in which it was pointed out, among other pertinent facts, that the trend of modern biological thought is back to vitalism. In the summary above all the essential superiority of Scholasticism as an indispensable aid to science was made clear. Commenting briefly on the features of the scholastic system, Father Schwitalla showed how its dualism was a much more scientific attitude than that of monistic materialism; how its moderate realism was a stimulus to further research; how its moderate pragmatism encouraged the mind by insisting that truth is attainable, while recognizing, at the same time, the difficulties of attaining to absolute certitude in scientific matters; and finally, how its dynamic character, unlike the deadening influence of determinism and materialism, was a constant spur to action. His conclusion was that "Scholasticism is far more scientific than its rival theories."

Surely, if Scholasticism is of its very nature adaptable to the changes of a rapidly advancing science like biology, there is no reason to doubt its ability to guide the researches and interpret the findings of the other sciences. Indeed, whether he likes it or not, every scientist in his search for truth must in practice at least accept the "fundamental primitive truths" of that system which he affects to despise. Scholasticism is not dead, and every scientist should be glad it isn't. For the day on which Scholasticism dies will see the death of science.

John J. Wellmuth, S. J.

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HERE AND THERE

An account of the organization meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association will appear in the next number of the Province News Letter. Hence our reticence on the subject.

The forthcoming quarterly review published by "America" will, we are told, bear the title "Thought". The first issue is expected to appear in March.

Father Raphael McCarthy's paper on "The Psycho-Galvanic Reflex as a Measure of Conation" was very favorably received by the scientists who attended the meeting of the A. A. A. S. in Kansas City last month. Some of them were quite unaware that Experimental Psychology had a place in our curriculum.

At a local celebration of the birthday of the late Denton J. Snider, Father Stritch discussed "The Influence of Dr. Snider's writings." Our issue of last February, it will be remembered, gave a brief account of Dr. Snider and his connection with "the St. Louis Movement" among local philosophers.

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SEMINAR NOTES

First Year

On Sunday, December 20, the third "seminar" or study-club of First Year met and organized. Every man in the year now belongs to one of these groups: six to the first, six to the second, and eight to the third. The following topics have been, or soon will be, discussed: How to Study Theses (material gathered by interviewing theologians and faculty members), Truth and Error, Nature and Kinds of Certitude, The Three Kinds of Necessity. The heads of the groups, Mr. Morrisen, Mr. Foley, and Mr. Dietz, occasionally meet to compare notes and exchange ideas. Each of these groups is, of course, a separate unit, and thus far there has been no need of a central organization.

Second Year

Mr. Keeven, the Chairman of this group, submits the following report of recent activities:

In our weekly meetings, many questions relating to Psychology had not been satisfactorily settled even after long discussion. So we requested Father Gruender to come to the rescue. In a sort of "clearing sale" fashion we collected and submitted our difficulties, and he spent an hour and a half with us one night in answering them. Out of the thirty or more questions submitted by the class, we select these as characteristic:

1. Why is the flopping off a chicken whose head has been cut off more wonderful than the action of the excised cells in Carrel's cultures?
2. Excised cells, it is said, do not need a vital principle because organization is supposed and teleology is lacking. But epithelial cells have organization, for they preserve their specific character in the culture. Is not this teleology, and do we not need a vital principle in this case?
3. What is meant by sense cognition?
4. Theoretically the will is free; but really it follows the strongest motive in any given case.

During the holidays, Father Gruender lectured to the seminar on "The Ouija Board and Hypnotic Phenomena". A recent discussion on "The Origin of Ideas" aroused great enthusiasm. In the next meeting a "Catholic priest" and an "atheist doctor" will exchange views on "The Existence of the Soul."

Third Year

Since just before the holidays, a group of four men from Third Year have been experimenting with "seminar" methods, and will soon have a workable plan of organization for those interested. In their informal weekly meetings, the members of this group have thus far reviewed the main points of Theodicy and Ethics, and express themselves as being more than satisfied with the results obtained. After this general review, they are to discuss principally ethical questions, limiting the topic so that it may be thoroughly treated in each meeting.

E D I T O R I A L

THE RESULT OF A YEAR'S WORK

Mr. John E. Reardon, founder and first editor of THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN, began his first issue last January with the following statement of policy:

"This new philosophical bulletin...is an attempted realization of the need of giving some expression, in a simple way, to the great truths of Scholasticism...It pretends to observe the ways in which American leaders of thought, with some philosophy to popularize, are proceeding, and to capitalize their methods for Scholasticism. It aims ulteriorly at the development of a philosophy of adapted apologetic method, at the gradual erection of a well-grounded system for carrying the larger and more vital things in scholastic philosophy to the American mass mind." (Vol. I, No. 1, p. 1.)

During the past year it has been the aim of his successors to devise a practical method of approach to this program,--a program which, as Mr. Reardon himself admitted, is both large and ambitious. After much consultation and experiment, we are able definitely to restate this general policy on the following workable basis:

1. THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN is primarily a student publication, edited and supported by the students of the School of Philosophy of St. Louis University. Its principal object is to encourage the scholastics here to express their views on philosophical subjects, and to give expression to the great truths of Scholasticism clearly, correctly, and in an interesting way. This object we conceive to be of such paramount importance that we refuse to adopt any policy which might interfere with it, such as plans for more extensive circulation and the consequent adoption of a higher standard.

2. Professors of Philosophy throughout the Province, and in fact all our readers, are respectfully invited to contribute occasional articles. This will serve as a stimulus to our student contributors and add a certain dignity to our little bulletin.

3. The only limitation on articles is that they be obviously philosophical in content or application, and do not exceed three of these pages in length. Longer articles may, however, be printed serially if desired. Further details as to the type of article desired may be gathered from an inspection of our back numbers, and by a reference to the list of topics sent to all our readers last June. Additional copies of this list may be had on request. ~~Unless~~ Except in very special cases, we shall not publish articles on methods of teaching philosophy; since it appears somewhat anomalous for students ~~for~~ to be publishing a teachers' review.

4. Thus far lack of material has prevented us from introducing sufficient variety into each issue. We should like each of our four articles to be of a different nature: one, a clear, correct, and informal explanation of some philosophical point; the second, a "contact" article, showing the influence of some scholastic doctrine in modern life and thought; the third, an essay of the familiar type, stressing a personal viewpoint of philosophy; and finally, an historical article sketching the work of scholastic or modern philosophers.

The Key to the Study of Saint Thomas. Olgiati-Zybura. Herder, St. Louis, 1925.

It is a pleasure to single out for special welcome amid the ever-growing number of works on St. Thomas, this very neat volume that Herder has just published. It is a translation by the industrious Father John S. Zybura from the Italian of Msgr. Francesco Olgiati, Professor of Metaphysics at the University of the Sacred Heart, Milan. I readily agree with the quotation, given in the translator's foreword, from the review of the original by Professor A. E. Taylor of Edinburgh: "It is an exceptionally well-written and clear exposition of the notion of 'being' which lies at the root of the whole Thomist philosophy. I could warmly recommend it to anyone who is trying to make himself acquainted with the central thought of Thomism and wishes for a lucid introduction." The "key" to the study of St. Thomas, or the "soul of St. Thomas", as the title of the original has it, is of course, as has been pointed out by many writers, the concept of "being", "ens".

By way of introduction we are first given an illuminating chapter on "The Programme of St. Thomas", a brief sketch of the philosophical development that found its culmination in the great Thomistic synthesis. Then, as we enter into this stately, well-constructed edifice of Thomistic thought, the author in quick succession applies his "key" to many a compartment and vault and shows us how easily the key turns in the lock, disclosing the treasure within. Thus we are introduced to numerous problems in Epistemology, Ontology, Theodicy, Ethics, Psychology, the relation of Philosophy to Theology. In fact, this book of 170 pages offers a good repetition of a large part of one's philosophy, a repetition particularly helpful since it sets forth the unity subsisting between the component parts. I freely admit that I have never had the pleasure which came to a certain writer, who "while perusing the Summa Theologica...received the impression of strolling through a forest, in the calm of a serene dawn, where the singing of all the birds--the voices of all preceding thinkers--are blended into one harmonious whole." (p. 1). I didn't hear the birds sing and all the rest of that, but I did find the "Key" instructive and well worth reading.

Father Zybura has done the work of translation well, though here and there one might find fault. That "bete noire" for the translator, "ratio entis", is not well rendered, I think, by "reason of being", though what in the wide world I'd substitute, I know not. "Metaphysical constitutive", where "constitutive" is used as a noun, does not sound well. I should prefer "data of sense" to "data of sensibility"; and so for a number of other expressions.

Again, it might be questioned, though the observation is not entirely original with me, whether St. Augustine is accurately represented when it is said: "Augustine, in his ascent of the mount of Truth, would fain follow the debatable path that rises from the true to the affirmation of the real, and finds in logical truth itself the proof of the existence of ontological reality, of God and creatures." (p. 20)

The concept of being is indeed a fruitful one, and it is important that we apprehend it properly. Through many a long page in the Irish Eccles-

istical Record during the past year or two a certain champion of Thomistic principles, over-zealous perhaps, has endeavored to show that it was by reason of his allowing "imagination to encroach on the intelligence in the grasping of being" that Suarez got off on a wrong track and thus came into opposition with St. Thomas in all but three of the famous "twenty-four theses" that were drawn up some ten years ago. Well, whatever be the truth of that matter, and even though we need not perhaps grant that all the steps in the development of the concept of being follow with such ineluctable certainty that we must, for example, embrace the explanation given (p. 163) in regard to the hypostatic union (a position based on the real distinction of essence and existence), still we must needs admire the magnificent synthesis (*haud expertus loquor*) that St. Thomas has constructed on the concept of being, and we are grateful to Fr. Zyburra for supplying us with a key so finely wrought.

vV.C.S.

Proteus, or The Future of Intelligence, By Vernon Lee, Litt. D.

Dutton, New York, 1925. 63 pages.

This small book represents an extreme stage of intellectual decadence corresponding to an extreme of pseudo-intellectual sophistication. In a chatty, loose-thought fashion which the authoress gladly designates as amateurish, it puts forth what philosophers call relativism, not as a system of philosophy - for the authoress disclaims the name of philosopher - but as merely a ready, easy, and proper attitude for persons of intelligence, which reconciles them to the continual change of their views corresponding to a continual change in reality. Reality - everything in reality, including religious, moral, and metaphysical principles - if, indeed, such things have any reality - is said to be continually on the change, like Proteus, of whom Virgil says:

"Ille, suae contra non immemor artis
Omnia transformat sese in miracula rerum
Ignemque, horribilemque feram, fluviumque liquentem."

It is the office - or rather the amusement - of Intelligence (spelled with a capital) to "keep an eye on Proteus," and hence to change continually.

"Need one add", says the writer, "that Intelligence is far more liable to mistakes than either 'Reason' or 'Logic'? But its mistakes, though so much more numerous, are, methinks, less massively enthroned and less likely to block the way than theirs... The mistakes which Intelligence commits to-day, it will, in its light-hearted way, correct to-morrow, being as little ashamed of revokes as its disconcerting friend Proteus is of transformations. Of course, Intelligence is rather irresponsible and, one might add, cannot help being so because it is essentially responsive." (pp. 20 & 21.)

Of course morality is but a passing show, and its relation to God and religion is a mere superstition, which we have already outgrown.

"Morality no longer holds the same place in our thoughts as, say in those of Ruskin, George Eliot, or...even in those of Huxley. Not the same (if one

may say so, ubiquitous) place; a place more clearly defined, but only the more important, ever since Intelligence, ferreting among 'Golden Boughs', 'Religion of the Semites', and similar books, has quietly stripped from our moral valuations that half-supernatural, half-aesthetic halo which is but the shrunken religious involucrum wherein they came into the world." P. 27.

The book is disgusting in more places than one, but nowhere more so than in the following:

"Indissoluble marriage, which already strikes some of us as scarcely decent, will lose its practical utility once inheritance is more or less abolished, and the subsistence and education of children no longer a charge on parents. Nor is this all: a more restricted practice and therefore habitual notion of ownership, may at some distant day educate man and women, parents and children, lovers and friends, nay, masters and disciples, to admit Proteus even into the impregnable stronghold and inviolable sanctuary of human selfishness called Love. The "marriage of true minds" may, like the other one, come to be supplemented by honourable divorce... There may come an end to the ideal of such fidelity as implies the claim of him or her once preferred to be preferred for ever; the duty also of continuing to prefer once having begun. Like much of the morality of a more intelligent age, "decent" behaviour in matters of sentiment will be based less upon an ought than an is... As with fidelity in love, so also with 'loyalty' to persons, even to causes and ideas." (Pp. 32-34.)

The reader's sense of reverence is shocked by the supercilious allusion to "the foolish Franciscan laudation of beggary" (p. 36), and his piety is outraged by the blasphemously sneering reference to the Creator as "what used to be called God, but may now be thankful when philosophers (like Mr. Floyd Morgan) allow it merely adjectival rank as 'Deity'." (p. 44.)

But then reverence and piety are old-fashioned superstitions. Intelligence is ushering in a new era.

"I would hazard the supposition," says the authoress modestly, "that it was because the men of the Past were presented with such a mass of ready-made thoughts, creeds, philosophies, and moral formulas (think of Deuteronomy!) all given for perfect and definitively valid, that there did not appear till so late in the day just what I have called Intelligence, which alone could give that without which the greatest genius is solitary and barren: an audience, a reader, a mind able to carry on the thinking and, in so far, able to eliminate the deciduous, the rubbishy elements of the thought already offered to it." (p. 55.)

This, then, is the great advance that has been made. We have outgrown faith and truth and morality and friendship and fidelity and love and a belief in God; and in place of these childish conceptions we have a blasee, ultra-sophisticated Intelligence, which sits dreamily amid its cushions at its tea-cups, and talks wearily and incoherently through cigarette smoke to its equally sophisticated companions - whom we must not debase by the name of friends - and finds a mawkish satisfaction in the self-conscious exercise of its ability "to eliminate the deciduous, the rubbishy elements of the thought offered to it," by the sages of the past and present and the books of Sacred Scripture! We have given up our ideals of womanhood and knighthood (oh, how ridiculously old-fashioned those words are!) and

of philosophy and religion and duty and truth, and in their place, as the bleak darkness of unbelief settles upon our self-sufficient humanity, we have a hideous skeleton tottering on the edge of a friendless grave and chattering blasphemies in the night wind!

Pierre Bouscaren, S.J.

BOOKS RECEIVED

The following books will be reviewed in the near future:

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY:

The Mind and Its Place in Nature. By Durant Drake.

E. P. DUTTON:

Elements of Practical Psycho-Analysis. By Paul Bousfield.

Hephaestus. By Fournier D'Albe.

Ourobaros. By Gareth Garrett.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA:

Maurice Blondel's Philosophy of Action. By Katherine Gilbert.

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LOOKING THROUGH A KNOTHOLE

By W. C. C. C.

SEMINAR NOTES - COMMUNICATIONS

EDITORIAL - BOOK REVIEWS

BULLETIN OF THE PHILOSOPHY SEMINAR

